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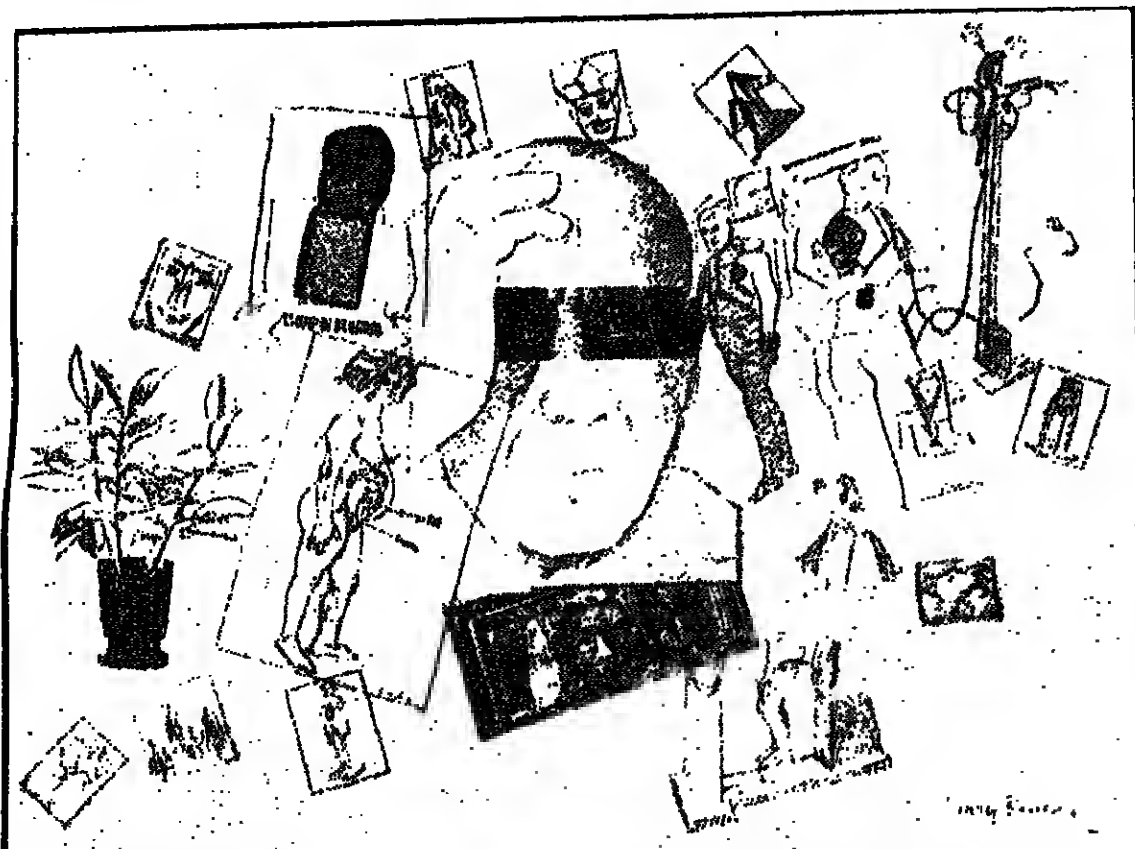
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TLS Commentary

All about Adam

By its half-way stage *The Glittering Prizes* (BBC 2) is deep in sly self-love. In the third episode ("A Past Life") Adam left Cambridge and arrived in London, and the serial comic out and confessed that it was really about media people contemplating themselves. And though the manners (like the chinlins) are meticulously "dated", this self-consciousness distinguishes the whole show from the ruminations of fictionalized, textualized social history (which are to drama as TVP to steak) the BBC now seems to be a casual expert with a vision of the whole, to produce an illusion of authenticity and neutralize the natural qualities, but here the actors are portraying people who were always performers, for whom reality was already a performance. Frederic Raphael's script assumes in every shape that performance is of the essence (no dualistic nonsense about inner states in this Cambridge philosophy), and Tom Conti as Adam, the winning maverick and in-depth Jewish jokes, gives off a convincing sense of ruthless talent and an appeal to far less sincere it could almost pass for humility. You get the feeling as you watch—and not just because each part is allowed to spread itself over seventy-five minutes—that the thing must have been pure pleasure and indulgence for everyone concerned.

Not that the style excludes unpleasantness. Although the world is beginning to arrange itself around Adam and his ambitious friends with psychopathic neatness, there are disturbing signs of things that will not fit, that cannot be translated into novels, movies or chat shows. In "A Past Life" Adam, rehearsing the role of TV interviewer, confronts someone who in terms of his values is a contradiction: a monster—a stubborn survivor from the 1930s (played by Eric Porter) whose creative genius is tied up with unreason and fascism. Adam asks: what he wants in a sense (this is clearly to be his doom through-out) and provokes a demonstration of "the nasty Caliban's" sordid insanity. But it is too ugly—a shapeless hatred that cannot be bullied into shape by his over-articulate charm. The Nothing Hill scene also provides another functional footnote, a kind of background noise behind the nervous flow of words. The centre of interest, however, is the talkers (Adam keeping his wife



"Homage to Picasso", a collage-cum-drawing by Larry Rivers from the exhibition Art on Paper which opened this week at Climpel Fils (30 Davies St, London W1) and which runs until March 6. The exhibition also features the work of some thirty other artists, including Barbara Hepworth, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg and Scottie Wilson.

waiting while he soliloquizes about the virtues of silence, in his underpants) and the chemistry of success. The peculiar tragedy-comedy of *Frederic Raphael* sees it, that they are professionals at pleasing, producing all the answers but never getting round to setting the questions for themselves. What is special about them is the stability of their making talents and their eager conventionalism ("Fleet Street's finished the theatre's finished..."). The box is the thing. Adam tells his first novel (but really himself) to the film people who set him to work on an awful 1960s swinger ("the world of the jet-setters... the shift of the end of the rainbow"), but instead of being cynically exploited by the movie world, he like Frederic Raphael, wins an Oscar for his script, in a nice double-take that points the moral. Unreality is going to be as hard to beat as reality is, and it is the artist who is rewarded, he

When the sleeper wakes

The paperback edition of Oliver Sacks' *Awake* (344pp, Penguin, £1) contains extensive new footnotes, adding about one-third to the length, and a photographic supplement. The book, which was first published in 1973, is an account of the experiences of a group of survivors of the great sleep paralysis epidemic of 1916-17, illuminated by the author's sense of the numerous strange cases of his observations before, during and after the administration of DOPA, a drug which induces cases, especially in the elderly.

The new footnotes add, self-further layers of reference and allusion to the history of sleep paralysis. Conrad comes into it, Thomas Gunn, Rosemary-Huxley, Auden frequently. A significant note contrasts the serene pacifism of a group of patients at a less respectable, but equally lively, hospital with the violent jolts from excess to excess of the patients at Dr Sacks' postmodern New York hospital—"not a sanatorium but a lunatic asylum, or one of the lunatic asylums." A microcosm deals with the ravages of the notions of space and time required to account for perceptual in which time may dilate, contract, stagnate or even reverse sequence, to account for the last extraordinary (but well attested) case. Dr Sacks suggests that moments of perception "may be taken in several at a time, as a moving whole continually swallows a swarm of shrimps." Do these

begin to wonder what it was he did right. It is good television (spirited and soulless) and is not going to dent anyone's feelings. The Sunday Times colour supplement did a fascinating piece on it, treating the directors, the production team, the actors and Mr Raphael as the true subjects of the serial, and that is probably right, and explains his World's Edge, came out with a memorable line of dialogue of his own, which could belong to almost any of the characters. It's a very hard part to play—being a bit and not being a bit.

Lorna Sage

The Unnamable

It creeps own to die, like animals, But does not die. It burrows in the thick Compost of mud and garden, fitches up Peeking at attic skylights, with the lock Turned tight with rust, unable to escape. It frets and rustles, uttering troll calls.

Nothing can heat or help it. Seek it out, It will go deeper, further. It won't wait What finds your comfort, knowing best What finds your fever, out; what cures my kill. You recognize the sound, not smell the scent: More, you too crouch in darkness, where an animal Crawls on all fours, head down, the collapsing tunnel.

Anthony Thwaite

Culture gauge

Wagnerians may be surprised to find that the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, edited by the late Dr. Gustav Kuhn, is now being published by the Royal Anthropological Institute. An account of a lecture by Claude Lévi-Strauss on "Perceval and Parsifal" is the leading article in the current issue, and his analysis of the successive transformations and elaborations of the story from Chrétien de Troyes to Wagner makes intriguing reading. (Though when one has finished J. B. Lohmann's disquisition on facial anthropology, one might be forgiven for taking both raw and cooked with a pinch of salt.)

As the latest offspring of an institution tracing its lineage back to the foundation of the Anthropological Society in 1837, this decidedly Victorian publication is helping to return the RAI to a role that extends well beyond the confines of academe. More information is available from the RAI at 25 Craven Street, London WC2N 6LJ.

Flowing verse

A new poetry magazine and/or anthology attracts attention and establishes standards is always faced with a dilemma: whether to present a new, obscure or neglected and/or show recognition; or whether to solicit the poet and risk being outnumbered with charitable letters from their dead files. The issue of *Thames Poetry* (50p, from the editor, A. A. Cleary, 160 Regent Road, Waltham, Harrow, Middx HA3 7AX) has boldly taken the second course and survived the test with aplomb. The recall of contributors (Thom Gunn, David Davie, Roy Fuller, A. J. Smith, J. Enright, John Hollander, Anthony Thwaite) evokes the spirit of the 1950s, the shade of a poetry magazine like *Lit* or *hops*. One realizes that these writers would ever offer anything less than their best, and it is more, A. A. Cleary has done the honour of having them be invited (by W. and J. Morgan, Chatham).

Hollander, Thwaite and Enright in light through an intricate maze, while David Davie and Roy Fuller offer characteristic meditations in their different though related modes of cultivated and un-



Detail from *La Mère d'Enfer*, a pastel and black crayon drawing of 1866, at the Hayward Exhibition.

Poet among the peasants

and vision remained deeply rooted in the landscape of Gruchy and the Normandy coast around Cherbourg. His contemporaries as a landscape painter were Théodore Rousseau, Corot and Daubigny. As a painter of country life and peasantry he is like Le Nain, a key figure in a long line of artists who, from Breughel to Permeke, made the theme of rural labour central to their work.

Miller was widely read, admired by a close circle of friends, and showed remarkable integrity and independence of mind. He was a socialist, sharing many of the ideas of Lamennais, his political views and opinions were far removed from those of the radical revolutionaries. His outlook on life was contemplative and melancholic. In 1851 he wrote to his friend the critic Germain:

I must confess to you, at the risk of appearing even more socialist, that it is the human aspect of things, that which is pitifully human, that touches me most in art, and that if I could accomplish that which I wished to do, or even attempt it, I would do nothing else than that which stems from impressions derived from the aspect of nature, either in terms of figures or of landscapes. And it would never be the joyful side of things that I would see. I do not know where this is to be found and I have never seen it. That which is experienced by me as joyful to be found in the calm and silence that one revives in, either in the forest or near to cultivated land...

That some of Miller's pictures—"The Man with the Hoe" for instance—were greeted with abuse and that hidden political implications were ascribed to many of his works was largely due to his subject-matter and to fluctuating attitudes towards the peasant population of France. Miller's peasants and the images of manual labour that his paintings contained seemed menacing in the middle of the century, for instance, in 1844. Twenty-five years later, the same images were seen as reassuring by the urban bourgeoisie, and the figures in his paintings interpreted as symbols of immovable stability. Later still, Miller's subject-matter was considered, at least among intellectuals, to be sentimental, reflected notably in the case of "The Angelus" (1857), an archetypal image of Catholic piety. The fact that these peasants lived in such a long and less surprising when one considers that until 1914 some 77 per cent of the population of France was engaged in agriculture, and that the French peasantry, largely though not invariably, constituted a reactionary force in electoral terms. But Miller, like Victor Hugo, was a man of the people, and his work was lumped

together with that of Bastien-Lepage or Legros, and the title of "Michel Ange des Paysans" branded him as forever undesirable.

Several factors contributed to his loss of popularity. Miller's paintings do not proclaim radical ideology or an uncompromising affirmation of reality like those of Courbet whose work, always seen as having dangerous implications in his own lifetime, has retained this admirable quality ever since. Courbet's form is always a spatial structure, hence his potency. Miller's paintings do not always possess this quality. In addition, because a few of his works tend to sentimentalism and bear out Baudelaire's criticism of his painting as having a "philosophic, melancholy Raphaelite pretentiousness", it was assumed that all his work was of this kind, to the same way that a charge of sentimentality was invariably levelled against him. The use of biblical subjects completed the stereotype image of his work. He used these frequently: in "The Shepherd Showing Travellers their Way" of 1857, based on the pilgrims of Emmaus, "The Harvesters" (1851), based on the story of Ruth and Boaz, both in the current exhibition, and in his treatment, via the earnings of Rembrandt, of the Holy Family.

What the exhibition reveals is that Miller was not only an artist of great power but also one of extraordinary diversity. From his earliest work, based on the painting of Prospero and Rubens to the late pictures of the seasons (brought together for the first time since 1881), there is continual experimentation. The manner in which he applies paint—from the meticulous accumulation of pigment, recalling Chardin, on the arms of "The Gleaners" of 1857 to the swirling brushstrokes in the "Coup de Vent" of 1871-73—emphasizes the range of expression he found within the restricted confines imposed by his themes.

Paintings like the small "Faggot Gatherers" of 1850 contain a degree of tension and violence that is not to be found in "The Man Grating a Tree" of 1855, based on a line of Virgil, can be seen as a work of intense contemplation, in which the iconography of the arrested gesture, found so often in his paintings, conveys a sense of finality. Some of his pictures are painted with a vapid, total modulation based on pink, pale blue and muted greens. Others, like the big pastel from the Burrell collection, "The Gleaners", are painted in a more varied palette. The "Gleaners" is a double-spread, rendering them virtually useless. Each of these could easily have been contained within a single page. A book costing £25 merits a more careful layout.

Peter de Francia

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The poison of praxis

By Alan Ryan

JOHN HOFFMAN:
Marxism and the Theory of Praxis
239pp. Lawrence and Wishart. £4

illicit fashion. It is, however, not easy to believe that anyone has wanted to deny that; what they have denied is that entire social systems are subject to laws of succession which work themselves out "with iron necessity", and they have certainly suggested that if societies were in that sense subject to deterministic laws it would be hard to see much room for freedom of action.

Mr. Hoffman's defence of a dialectics of nature is similarly strong on the scholarly point that since George Dickstein's brilliant analysis of Avineri, Mxrx did share Engels's belief that "the law of the transformation of quantity into quality" operated both in nature and in society, and weak on the more interesting question of whether or not so-called law is anything more than the doctrine of emergent properties terted up. To what sense is it a law; and what does it explain? To these ancient questions Mr. Hoffman gives no satisfactory answer. Nor does he take any notice of the basic doubt about the applicability of the dialectic to the natural world, which is that a process of continuous development does not have adequate expressions in discrete concept makes some sense if nature is really spirit working out its own view of itself, but none otherwise.

Again, the analysis of Mxrx's determinism elaborately ignores the issue that the most obvious opponents are most anxious about. It is hardly entirely persuasive that in some senses freedom requilts determinism, since we could not set out to be rational unless the world responded to our efforts in a predictable way.

ception as an activity, he does not go on to wonder whether the concept of reflection will cover the amount of expectation, hypothesis formation and inference which can

Public and private madness

By John Rex

JOSEPH GABEL :
False Consciousness
An Essay on Reification
Translated by M. A. and K. A.
Thompson
358pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £9.

ged very much in any
 yet, if we are to judge
 NED's performance
 Hence when *La Conscience*
Essay Concerning Human
 standing "he that hath no
 out ideas wants meaning
 world", or when he rejects
 but ways of understanding
 "meaning" of words as a
 ways of making known
 they stand for, he must be
 to be offering a theory of
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Cortolysis, Lacko's the
 defective, not least because
 to distinguish adequately
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 tion and the denota-
 names—e.g. between the
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 and the several ambigu-
 by it. However, Lacko
 perfectly well have
 some such distinction in
 as the Port Royal is
 already been known as
 the "comprehension" of
 "extension" of ideas.

JOSEPH GABEL:
 False Consciousness
 An Essay on Reflection
 Translated by M. A. and K. A.
 Thompson
 358pp. Oxford: Blackwell, 69.

French intellectualism in the human
 studies presents considerable prob-
 lems to the English reader, since
 the large number of oc-
 casions when he is asked to
 who are Marxists, their writ-
 ings are either themselves Marxist,
 or so much engaged in de-
 whose terms are set by the Marx-
 ists, they appear to have a
 scholastic quality, not unlike that
 of the Kings of the Frankfurt
 school in Germany. The reader
 who opens Joseph Gabel's
False Consciousness is eager for il-
 lumination on the problem of false-
 hood, asserted political and indivi-
 dualism in the world should
 earn himself first a knowledge of
 Mexican. For, in the debate in which
 M. Gabel is engaged, it is not the
 Empirical problems of the false
 consciousness which we find in

Corollary. Lucko's the defective, not least because to distinguish inadequately what Mill later called the "dual pictures" of the "dualisms" - e.g. between the "dualisms" and the several animals by it. However, Lucko perfectly well have been such a distraction for terms, as the Port Royalists already done between and the "comprehension" "extension" of ideas. It is right to claim, as Lucko does, that until Dr. Hacking cleared himself of this he entered into the philosophical game. Dr. Hacking seems to saddle the Port Royalists with the "overphilosophical" ideas, as he argues. Lucko's thesis that theories of meaning are wrong with substantially the same as the seventeenth century philosophers were tackling.

There are many stimulating insights in Dr Hacking's book. It is a modal of philosophy, but it is not a philosophy. It is a historical record of historical record matches of landings of its title.

These terms are set by the Marxists, those they appear to have a right to setting. It is the writing of the Marxists in Germany. Thus the Marxists who oppose Joseph Gebel's "Social Consciousness" asger for illustration on the problem of false consciousness. The Marxists and individual pictures of the Marxists learn first with a Marxists. For, in the debate in which Marx is engaged, it is not the Marxists' problems of the false consciousness which we find in everyday life, but the Marxists' relationship between the Marxists' relationship, false consciousness, religion, ideology, totality, basis, and superstructure which is at stake. As Lucko notes, although the book actually discusses conceptual and intellectual "reflections" of the issue in both politics and psychology, it presents its concepts in a highly reified way and, instead of transcendence of the reification of concepts which politics and empiricism which politics in trade, there is a feeling of being trapped all the time in dogmatism - not to a discussion of what is, but to a discussion of what is not the case, but rather what may and what may not be thought.

The preliminary observations

An entirely revised edition of Simon Potter's well-known book on linguistics, *The Modern Linguistic Movement in The Longueurs Library*, published by André Delbecq, is now available. The book was first published in a Penguin paperback in 1968, and is now being reissued in a hardcover edition. The new edition is a revised and expanded translation of the original French edition, which was published in 1964. The book is a comprehensive introduction to the field of linguistics, covering the history of the discipline, the major theories and methods, and the current state of research. The book is written in a clear and accessible style, and is suitable for both students and non-specialist readers. The book is available in paperback for £12.95 and in hardcover for £19.95. The book is available from the publisher, André Delbecq, 100, rue de la Harpe, 75001 Paris, France. The book is also available from the publisher, Simon Potter, 100, rue de la Harpe, 75001 Paris, France.

Lukácsian Idealism lies in drawing out of the Marxist discussion of alienation a notion of the reification of consciousness which distorts the situated and embodied

the time-distorted and changing nature of the world and rendering it thing-like, end, much more seriously heretical, making this refined false consciousness a more or less independent variable in his subsequent sociological, philosophical and literary work. M. Gabel follows him in this.

Moreover he goes beyond Lukács in emphasizing Karl Mannheim's total conception of ideology (which is the systematisation of false conceptions rather than the projection of class interests as Lukács would have it), which sees ideology as distorted only immediately by economic interests. Finally, however, a total and radical sociological theory of knowledge is the province of the heart of M. Gellner's thinking and this he finds (beyond of heresies) in Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. It is with this concept of ideas, starting from Marx and ending with Lukács and Lukács, Mannheim and Durkheim, that he confronts the concept of schizophrenia.

The assessment of Gebel's argument on matters of psychopathology must be left to clinical psychologists and psychiatrists. I only imagine that their response in England may be negative, unless they have found their way to some kind of phenomenological Marxism through the work of Barthes. There do remain one problem. Whether it is the relation between political reflection and false consciousness, and the mass individual formations and the mass media, or the society makes men ill or do sick men make society? I do not think that M Gebel has a clear answer to this. Either, at best, he must have a very naive and naive perspective on temporalities.

[illegible]

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